

# THE MILITANT

**INSIDE**  
**‘Workers need to take power,’**  
**says socialist at debate in NY**  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Locked-out workers stand firm as beet harvest nears

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

CROOKSTON, Minn.—With the harvest approaching, locked-out sugar workers are standing firm with round-the-clock pickets, and solidarity continues to be organized across the Red River Valley. The 1,300 members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union have been locked out by American Crystal Sugar since August 1, two days after workers rejected the bosses’ “final” offer by a 96 percent margin.

“Pre-piling of sugar beets begins September 6,” said Rick Roper, picketing outside the sugar factory here. “Pretty soon it’s going to get tense as the company starts up production.” New talks between the union and company broke down after one day, he said. “The company offered the

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Militant/Frank Forrestal

American Crystal Sugar plant, Hillsboro, North Dakota, August 27. Locked-out workers with rat donated by Teamsters Local 120.

## Libya: Imperialists rush to line up oil profits

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

August 31—A week after taking Tripoli, Libya’s capital, rebel forces are seeking to consolidate their hold over the country by advancing on Sirte, a strategically located city still controlled by Moammar Gadhafi’s forces. Meanwhile, European imperialist powers are in a “Dash for profit in post-war Libya carve-up,” as a headline in the August 24 *Independent* put it.

The U.S.-led NATO military alliance is launching air assaults around

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## The true face of capitalism

‘You’re on your own,’ NY mayor tells workers during storm



Above, AP photo/Mary Altaffer; Right, AP photo/Mike Groll

Above, government closed public transportation at noon August 27 even though Tropical Storm Irene was not scheduled to land in New York City until the following morning. Right, Alex Kraft, Sandra Kraft, and Brianna Floyd carry belongings as they leave Far Rockaway, Queens, for shelter in Manhattan under orders by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to evacuate by 5 p.m. Working people were largely left to fend for themselves.



The true face of capitalism. That’s what was shown by the actions of New York’s City Hall and other local, state, and federal bodies in face of hurricane and then tropical storm Irene.

The propertied ruling families have an easier time masking that brutal face when conditions seem relatively normal. When they’re not—whether

### EDITORIAL

under the impact of natural events like Irene, or the global economic and social crisis accelerating since 2007—the class exploitation, inequalities, and political rule underlying the dictatorship of capital are more undisguised.

“Everybody’s left to clean up on their own,” Pedro Beltrán, a construction worker, told a *Militant* reporting team Sunday afternoon, as he helped a friend whose basement apartment had flooded in Brooklyn’s Sheepshead Bay. “Just like people had to figure out how to evacuate on their own.”

But that’s the only way an evacuation can be carried out under capitalism—as an *individual* responsibility, not an organized mobilization based on *social solidarity*. As a matter of compliance with bourgeois laws, not voluntary cooperation to prevent deaths and injuries and minimize disruption of people’s lives.

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg made no bones about it in declaring the city’s first-ever mandatory evacuation of more than 370,000 people August 25. “We are today issuing a mandatory—I repeat the word mandatory—evacuation order,” the mayor announced. And he did so in a tone of class contempt registering the view of working people held by the capitalist class whose interests he and other Democratic and Republican politicians represent (and, in his particular case, the class he is also part of).

“Let’s stop thinking this is some-

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BY DOUG NELSON

The New York City government imposed its first ever mandatory evacuation and a total shutdown of the city’s transportation system in the days and hours leading up to the hurricane and then tropical storm Irene.

In the 13 states of Irene’s path, 44 people were reported killed and more than 5 million left without electricity. In the New York-New Jersey area, more than 800,000 were without power for more than 48 hours.

By the time Irene hit New York City in the morning of August 28, it had weakened to a tropical storm. But it still caused widespread flood damage in New York, New Jersey, and New England.

New York City was largely spared, with flooding in the lowest-lying areas, 650 downed trees, and 70,000 power outages, nearly all of which were re-

stored in fewer than three days. There were no reported deaths. For the big majority, the greatest hardship was imposed by actions of the city, state, and federal governments.

In the afternoon of August 26, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced a mandatory evacuation order for more than 370,000 residents in low-lying “Zone A” areas along with some additional parts of Queens.

People were given scarcely 24 hours to leave by a 5 p.m. deadline the next day. Nonetheless, Bloomberg announced that all city buses and subways would begin shutting down at noon Saturday, five hours before the deadline.

“Keep in mind, after noon tomorrow you’re not going to have the advantage of mass transit to help you,” he warned. And he told the disabled and elderly not to plan on using the city’s Access-a-

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## Protests in Israel involve Jews, Arabs: ‘It’s a bit of a new era’

BY SETH GALINSKY

Refusing to bow to the Israeli government’s attempts to derail the protests, leaders of demonstrations this summer against rising prices and deteriorating living conditions have called actions September 3 in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa. What began as a tent encampment against high rents in mid-July has spread across the country, in many places involving Jews and Arabs.

In the latest round of protests August 27, 10,000 marched in Tel Aviv, 2,000 in Jerusalem, and 4,500 in Rishon Letzion, southeast of Tel Aviv. There were also demonstrations in Katzrin in the Golan Heights and Kibbutz Ma’anit.

“It’s not just demands around housing. We want full employment, we want free education,” Stave Erez, a student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said in a phone interview. Erez heads the Academic Committee

of the National Union of Israeli Students.

“We don’t look at things as Jews versus Arabs,” she said. “We want to have the basic necessities for everyone who lives in Israel. We are all affected.”

The protests began when film

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# Socialist candidate on ballot in Houston mayoral election

BY STEVE WARSHELL

HOUSTON—Amanda Ulman, 36, an assembly-line worker and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor here, has been certified for the ballot. “To put an end to the deepening economic crisis and the resulting rising unemployment and imperialist wars that continue to spread, working people need to take political power,” Ulman said as she filed for ballot status.

So far, the only other candidate on the ballot is Democrat Kevin Simms. He is the CEO of Multicultural Action Group, which is “dedicated to helping small businesses obtain contracts,” according to My Fox Houston. Incumbent Mayor Annise Parker, also a Democrat, has announced plans to run for a second term, but as of August 26 had not yet filed.

Due to Houston’s undemocratic election laws, designed to keep workers off the ballot, Ulman was forced to pay a filing fee of \$1,250. The election is November 8.

Following the filing of her ballot papers, Ulman and Jacquie Henderson, SWP candidate for City Council At-Large Position 1, spoke with a reporter for Univisión Channel 45.

Ulman has also been campaigning in working-class neighborhoods and among her fellow workers at a forklift assembly plant in Houston. Ten of her coworkers have contributed a total of \$130 to the campaign. Three coworkers recently subscribed to the *Militant* for the first time and one attended the event launching the campaign.

Carlos Cruz, a 45-year-old assembly-line worker, told the *Militant*, “I like her way of thinking. She works in favor of workers, immigrants, and the right of women to choose abortion. She’s thinking about the future.”

Coverage of Ulman’s campaign on local Spanish-language news was noted by fellow workers as well as people on the street.

When Ulman entered a local donut shop, Rosa Martinez, the manager, said, “We saw you on the news last week. What do you think of Obama’s announcement, reviewing the cases of 300,000 people facing deportation?”

“I’m against all deportations, whether or not the person has a criminal record,” Ulman replied. “We have



Militant/Ronald Najarro

Amanda Ulman, center, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Houston, is interviewed by Milagros Durán of *Semana News*, a Spanish-language newsweekly, August 23. At left is Jacquie Henderson, the party’s candidate for City Council At-Large Position 1.

to keep fighting for the immediate and unconditional legalization of everyone.

“This is a fight for all working people, not just immigrant workers and

not just young people trying to get an education. That’s why I join every action for immigrant rights when there’s an opportunity and encourage other workers to do the same.”

## Brooklyn woman fights eviction, subprime scams

BY NANCY BOYASKO

BROOKLYN, New York—Mary Ward, 82, pushed back an eviction attempt by New York City marshals August 19 with the help of about 200 neighbors and other supporters who blockaded her house.

“She opened the door for other people not to be afraid and to fight,” Sarahlynn Lewis, a sculptor and disabled Vietnam veteran who lives in the neighborhood, told the *Militant*. “This is happening all over. It’s not a color thing.”

In an interview, Ward said she has been living in her house, located in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, since 1967. Her fight to keep it goes back to 1995 when she responded to a

flyer left in her mailbox from Delta Funding Corp., which was pushing subprime mortgages.

Ward says she received only a little more than \$1,000 of the \$80,000 loan she was promised. In 2000 Delta was sued for civil rights violations for swindling low-income house owners and targeting Black women, especially the elderly. As a result of the settlement, in 2001 Ward received a letter from Delta informing her that the mortgage would be cancelled. When Delta went bankrupt in 2007, however, she discovered that the mortgage had instead been bounced from bank to bank and she owed more

than \$200,000.

A real estate investment company, 768 Dean, bought the loan at an auction in 2008. The company foreclosed on the house in 2010 and stepped up harassment of Ward. She brought out a picture she took of a team from Adult Protective Services that came to her house. “When I saw the sun shining on the handcuffs, I jumped in the car and got away,” she recalls. APS is a program for “physically and/or mentally impaired adults.”

Retired New York City schoolteacher Richard Walker, a neighbor of Ward’s, said he has had to chase loan solicitors off his doorstep. “They prey on people.”



Mary Ward, victim of subprime mortgage swindle, speaks to reporters August 19 as her supporters mobilize to prevent marshals from evicting her from her home in Brooklyn.

# THE MILITANT

## Free the Cuban Five!

*Five revolutionaries from Cuba have been jailed on frame-up charges in the United States since 1998 as part of punishing Cuban working people for making a socialist revolution. Find out how you can help win their freedom by following the case in the ‘Militant.’*

Militant/Bill Arth

Participants in August 13 Los Angeles event view political cartoons by Gerardo Hernández, one of Cuban Five prisoners.

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# Calif. prison conditions spur ongoing protests

BY BETSEY STONE

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—More than 200 supporters of the prisoners who carried out a three-week hunger strike in July crowded into the California state capitol August 23 for a hearing on prison conditions. Held by the state assembly’s Committee on Public Safety, the hearing focused on solitary confinement in the Security Housing Units (SHUs), where many of the more than 6,500 hunger strikers are housed.

Ending long-term solitary confinement and punishment of prisoners for refusing to inform on fellow inmates were two key demands of the strikers.

Earl Fears, who spent time in the SHU at Corcoran State Prison, opened the hearing. He described the mental and physical toll on prisoners in solitary, where they are kept in windowless 8x10 cells more than 22 hours a day, without any human contact except guards.

Scott Kernan, undersecretary of operations for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, defended the SHUs. Kernan said they are necessary to segregate violent gang members, “who are involved in terrible assaults on inmates and staff.”

Speaker after speaker responded to Kernan. They cited examples of family members or friends condemned to the SHUs not because of violent acts, but based on being “validated” as gang members by prison authorities. Among the “evidence” used are tattoos, possession of Aztec drawings, speaking or exercising with a gang member, being fingered by another prisoner, or even by having a book by George Jackson, the Black inmate at San Quentin who exposed inhumane conditions and was killed by guards in 1971.

“Prison staff are free to condemn a prisoner to the SHU for an indeterminate sentence at will,” said Virginia Gutierrez Brown, whose husband has been in the Pelican Bay SHU for 22 years.

In response to questioning by state legislators, Kernan said the corrections department plans to continue “debriefing,” the code word for pressuring prisoners to finger others as gang members in return for better treatment or release from the SHU. Ending this practice was a major demand of the

hunger strikers. It divides inmates and serves as a means of control over those it turns into informers, the strikers explained. Prisoners in the SHUs have been kept there, in some cases for decades, simply because they refuse to make up or provide information that will do harm to others.

Ron Ahnen, who works with California *Prison Focus*, a magazine featuring prisoners’ articles and letters, emphasized that inmates validated as gang members are often “those who stand up for themselves, who stand up for other prisoners.”

“The SHUs are not primarily about gang activities any more than the ‘war on drugs’ is about drugs,” James Harris of the Socialist Workers Party said at the hearing. “They are attacks on the working class as a whole. They are meant to terrorize us out of activity and put fear in our hearts.” The hunger strike, he said, shows “these prisoners are not just victims, but are capable of organizing themselves to fight.”



Militant/Betsy Stone

Sophia García, left, and Kendra Castañeda speak at August 23 demonstration in Sacramento, Calif., in support of prisoners who conducted hunger strike in July to protest inhumane conditions. García’s brother is in solitary confinement at Corcoran State Prison; Castañeda’s husband is in solitary at Calipatria State Prison.

Protesters gathered on the steps of the capitol the morning of the hearing for a rally sponsored by the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Committee. Meredith Drennan from Santa Rosa said her son lost 30 pounds in the

hunger strike. “What impresses me most,” she said, “was how they organized across racial lines. The prison authorities impose their will by divide and conquer. The thing they fear most is unity.”

## Workers in Chile join students in 2-day strike

BY SETH GALINSKY

Workers and students joined a 48-hour nationwide strike in Chile August 24 and 25 demanding free university education, increased government funds for health care and pensions, and a new labor code.

The strike boosted a student protest movement, which has held nearly weekly protests over the last two months.

Strike demonstrations took place in 51 cities, Undersecretary of the Interior Rodrigo Ubilla told the *Miami Herald*. Differing government and union estimates of the turnout range from 175,000 to 600,000.

“It’s terrible that the CUT [United Federation of Workers] has called this strike, I think the damage they are doing to our country is immeasurable,” complained Chilean Labor Minister Evelyn Matthei in an August 26 radio interview posted on the government’s website.

That’s not how striker Miguel Escudero, a letter carrier for 29 years in Concepción, Chile, and member of the postal workers union, sees it. “The cost of transport, education, housing, and food have gone up too much,” he said in a phone interview, “but wages are static.

The minimum wage is just 175,000 pesos a month [\$375]. The only solution is to raise wages.”

For Escudero one of the most important demands of the strike is for free education. “My daughter’s tuition is more than I make in a month,” he said.

The cost of public education has jumped 26 percent since 2005, while the number of college students has risen to about 1 million from 200,000 some 20 years ago. The average student graduates with \$45,000 in debts.

The government of Sebastián Piñera, elected president in 2010, claims that the students’ demands are “more than utopian.”

Education was free in Chile until 1973, Escudero noted, when the government of Salvador Allende was overthrown by a U.S.-backed military coup.

The protests are another nail in the coffin of the myth of the Chilean economic “miracle.”

After Allende’s overthrow, the dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet privatized pensions, cut import tariffs, sold off state-owned industries, and fired thousands of government workers.

“In 30 years, Chile has gone from be-

ing a Third World country to a developed one,” proclaimed *Investor’s Business Daily* in a March 21 editorial, because Pinochet “turned the job of cleaning up a ravaged economy” over to economists who supported “free market reforms.”

After Pinochet stepped down and elections were held in 1990, subsequent governments continued his economic measures. Supporters of Chile’s capitalist course point to the country’s 6 percent yearly growth in gross domestic product and \$24 billion in foreign currency reserves as proof of its success.

“The Chilean experience,” said President Barack Obama during a visit in March, is a model “for the region and the world.”

“It’s not a model, it’s a failed experiment,” Sebastián Vielmas, secretary general of the University Student Federation at the Pontifical Catholic University in Santiago, told the *Militant*. “The economic growth has benefited a minority, the richest 20 percent, but it has not resulted in social development.”

Hoping to quell the protests, Piñera proposed \$4 billion more in education funds and a reduction from 5.6 percent to 2 percent in student loan interest rates.

“That changes nothing,” said Guillermo Salinas, a leader of the CUT. What students and the union movement want, he added, “is an end to an education system for profit.”

“The school system is discriminatory,” Vielmas explained. Students from wealthy families go to expensive private schools, while working people go to public schools that have inferior facilities and inadequate funding.



Demonstration in Osorno, Chile, August 24 as part of 48-hour strike for free university education, increased funds for health care and pensions, and new labor code.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**Imperialism and the Civil War in Libya: The Stakes for the Working Class.** Fri., Sept. 9, 7:30 p.m. 4025 S Western Ave. Tel.: (323) 295-2600.

#### San Francisco

**Israel: Widespread Protests against Sky-High Rents and Deteriorating Living Conditions.** Speaker: Carole Lesnick, Socialist Workers Party candidate for San Francisco district attorney. Fri., Sept. 9, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

### TEXAS

#### Houston

**What’s Behind the Civil War in Libya and the Fall of Moammar Gadhafi?** Speaker: Angel Lariscy, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 9, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 4800 W 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

## —CALENDAR—

### CANADA

#### Toronto

**All Out to Break the Silence Now! Demonstration to Demand Media Report on Case of the Cuban Five.** Mon., Sept. 12, 5:30 p.m. Yonge and Dundas Square by CityTV. **Film Showing of *Will the Real Terrorist Please Stand Up?*** 7:30 p.m. Beit Zatun House, 612 Markham St. Sponsored by Toronto Forum on Cuba.



# ‘Workers need to fight for power,’ says socialist in NY

## Debates Democrat, Republican in congressional race

BY RUTH ROBINETT

QUEENS, N.Y.—“The Socialist Workers Party is the only voice for working people in this election,” Chris Hoepfner told the audience at an August 23 candidates’ debate here in Rockaway Beach.

“We call for a break with the Democrats and Republicans, who work hand in glove to promote what benefits the capitalist class,” said Hoepfner, the SWP candidate in the September 13 special election for the 9th Congressional District seat. “We need to build the kind of revolutionary movement that can put working people in power and end class exploitation and wars.”

More than 130 people attended the event, sponsored by the Neponsit Property Owners Association and held at the West End Temple.

Hoepfner’s opponents, Republican Robert Turner and Democrat David Weprin, presented their experience as businessmen as an asset to serve in Congress. Hoepfner, who works in an electronics factory in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, said in recent weeks he had joined picket lines of Verizon strikers and a protest in Germantown, Maryland, to defend an abortion clinic targeted by opponents of women’s right to choose.

The newspapers write about an economic recovery, “but this is not

a recovery for working people,” Hoepfner said. “We are in a depression.” The Socialist Workers Party, he said, demands a massive, government-funded program “to create jobs for the unemployed, rebuilding infrastructure, schools, hospitals, firehouses. This is the only way we can stop the capitalists from putting their crisis on the backs of working people.”

“We have to grow our way out of the crisis,” said Turner. “We can restore prosperity by becoming energy self-sufficient, expanding hydrofracking, and drilling in Alaska.” He proposed cutting taxes for large corporations that return assets from abroad. Weprin said, “There is room to increase taxes. Close the loopholes for the biggest corporations. But no taxes on the middle class.”

Asked how he would have voted on the “debt ceiling,” Turner said he would have voted yes, although the agreement was weak. Social Security and Medicare can only be kept “with some pain,” he said. “Those under 55 will have to expect less.”

Hoepfner said he would have voted no. “The only issue debated in Washington was how far to cut Medicare and Social Security,” he said. Medical care “should not be run on a profit basis,” the socialist candidate said. “When you go to the hospital, the first ques-



Militant/Sara Lobman

August 23 candidates’ debate in 9th Congressional District sponsored by Neponsit Property Owners Association in Queens. From left, chair Peter Sammon; Republican Robert Turner; Socialist Workers Chris Hoepfner; and Democrat David Weprin. Right, Hoepfner told audience, “We need massive, government-funded program to create jobs for the unemployed, rebuilding infrastructure, schools, hospitals.”



tion is your insurance card, not taking your pulse.” Obama’s health care plan is “just a boon to the insurance companies.”

Turner objected to Obama’s plan because of the fee cuts doctors will face. Weprin said the White House plan “is

not perfect but does prevent insurance companies from denying coverage.”

“Housing is my biggest expense,” a woman in the audience said. “Will any of the candidates have the courage to step up to this problem?” She referred to publicly financed New York state apartment buildings scattered throughout the city.

Hoepfner agreed that government-funded housing is desperately needed. “It will take a revolutionary movement, like the one in Cuba, for everyone to have affordable housing. In Cuba they overturned capitalist ownership of the land.” That immediately made possible much lower rents, he said.

“There is no way that much money is around to afford that,” responded Turner.

# Libya: Imperialists rush to line up profits

Continued from front page

Sirte. Securing that city would give rebel forces control of Libya’s coastline from their de facto capital in Benghazi to Tripoli. It would allow the National Transitional Council to extend its power into the desert interior in the south where most oil fields and the oases that supply the country with fresh water are located, a senior rebel commander told the *Wall Street Journal*.

Many of Tripoli’s 2 million residents have faced deteriorating living conditions as rebel forces pushed Gadhafi loyalists out of residential neighborhoods. A week later, power outages affect large parts of the city, as well as a shortage of water. Prices for bottled water are skyrocketing. The main water facility supplying Tripoli and other Libyan cities is located in Hasouna, 400 miles south, which Gadhafi forces still control. Many working people are trying to cope by sharing water stored in neighbor’s wells.

After taking control of the Abu Salim neighborhood, a last refuge of Gadhafi supporters, residents freed some 1,500 people from the notorious prison there. Ali Matouk, 41, imprisoned there from 1991 to 2001, revisited his old cell block. “I never thought I’d be back here as a free man,” he told the *Journal*.

The Gadhafi regime massacred 1,200 Abu Salim inmates in 1996 after they revolted over conditions in the prison. This past February the arrest of a lawyer for families of those killed in 1996 sparked the uprising against Gadhafi and the six-month civil war.

Rebel forces have freed more than 10,000 prisoners, but nearly 50,000 arrested in recent months are unaccounted for, reported Al Arabiya.

The National Transitional Council is beginning to relocate from Benghazi to Tripoli. The 31-member council released the names of its members for the first time August 27. Mustafa Abdel-Jalil is chairman. But dissent over the council’s composition is growing. In Misrata, protesters “say the old guard of the Gadhafi regime are far too prominent in the list of people issued so far,” reported Al Jazeera.

On August 26 the 15-member council of the African Union refused in a close vote to recognize the National Transitional Council as Libya’s legitimate government, even though 57 nations have already done so. Among the reasons, said the organization’s chairman, is that the council is doing nothing to stop mistreatment and killings of black migrants from sub-Saharan Africa who are being falsely targeted by rebel forces as Gadhafi mercenaries.

Abdel-Jalil has made clear his priority is stabilizing capitalist rule. He told the media he supported bringing police forces from Arab and Muslim states into Libya.

He also made clear that those governments that have led NATO’s airstrikes will get priority for lucrative contracts. “We promise to favor the countries which helped us,” he said. Giant oil companies together with their governments in imperialist centers are jockeying for position.

Aiming for the biggest share of the pie, French President Nicolas Sarkozy has called for a special “Friends of Libya” conference to be held in Paris in early September.

“Thanks to our historic presence in the country, I do not think France will want to replace us,” Pablo Scaroni, head

of the Italian energy group ENI, told the media. Libya was an Italian colony from 1911 to 1942. ENI is already working with rebels in Libya’s eastern oil fields.

“I believe we should be trying to make sure we can get whatever business we can,” chimed in Lord Trefgarne, chair of the Libyan British Business Council, according to the *Independent*. BP is already making preparations to return.

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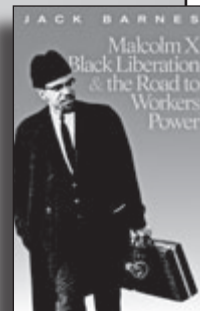
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Pathfinder Press



# Protests inside Israel

**Continued from front page**  
school graduate Daphni Leef, evicted when she couldn't pay a rent increase, invited others to set up tents with her in Tel Aviv and demand government action.

At an August 24 press conference, Leef said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's appointment of a commission to make proposals to ameliorate the crisis was "cynical and deceptive," since it has no power to carry out "fundamental . . . change in the socioeconomic order of priorities."

The protests have given a boost to workers' struggles and fights for democratic rights. Nearly 200 taxi drivers August 24 stopped traffic near Rothschild Boulevard, the center of Tel Aviv's tent city, protesting high gas prices and taxes.

"There was a time when gas was 15 percent of our expenses," Yehuda Bar-Or, head of the taxi drivers' union, told *Haaretz*. "Now it's 40 percent."

The social protest has fostered "a momentum for rights' issues that are under debate," Irit Rosenblum told the *Militant*. Rosenblum is the direc-

tor of New Family, which calls for the right to civil marriage in Israel. People classified as having "no religion" and couples of mixed religious backgrounds cannot get married in Israel.

"Some 300,000 immigrants from the former Soviet Union are not recognized as Jews," Alex Tenzer, an activist in the Russian community, told *Haaretz* August 30, "and are denied the right to marry in Israel." Tenzer said that the commission appointed by Netanyahu should remedy this denial of civil rights.

"I was at one of the recent social protests in Haifa," Ronit Sela, from the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, said in a phone interview. "At first the chants were in Hebrew. But then an Arab activist got on the stage and started slogans in Arabic and the crowd echoed them. That's the first time I've seen that at a demonstration like this in Israel in my life."

In Jerusalem, where Sela has vis-



Itai Bachar

**Protesters in Tel Aviv August 27 march against rising prices and deteriorating living conditions. Sign in Hebrew says, "Enough already."**

ited the tent city, "some of the protesters see this as a fight for the Jewish citizens of Israel," she said, "while in other places it's viewed as a fight for

all who live here. It's mixed."

Things are changing as a result of the protest movement, Sela added. "We've entered a bit of a new era."

## Struggle by locked-out sugar workers in Midwest

**Continued from front page**  
same deal we rejected." The union is demanding the company restart negotiations.

The only change in the "final offer" announced by company Vice President Brian Ingulsrud is to withdraw the \$2,000 signing bonus, which many workers consider a bribe in the first place.

Workers are locked out at five plants in the Red River Valley region of Minnesota (Crookston, Moorhead, East Grand Forks) and North Dakota (Hillsboro, Drayton), as well as two smaller facilities in Chaska, Minn., and Mason City, Iowa. At four plants visited over the August 27-28 weekend, pickets reported that in preparation for the harvest, American Crystal Sugar, the largest beet-sugar producer in the U.S., has added more surveillance lights and guards and is hiring additional scab labor.

David Pearson, a locked-out sugar worker in East Grand Forks, said some locked-out workers joined a one-day informational picket August 17 called by nurses in Bemidji. Members of the Minnesota Nurses Association there have authorized a strike against Sanford Medical Center over safe staffing

levels and no cuts in benefits. Pearson said the nurses donated \$10,000 to the locked-out workers.

In an act of solidarity, Pearson is donating his weekly \$100 union check to locked-out coworkers in North Dakota, where state officials have denied them unemployment benefits. He's not the only one doing that, he said.

Deb Hegg, who's been at the Crookston plant 14 years, said they are getting support from union workers "at New Flower Bus, Department of Transportation workers, teachers, Teamsters from the university, and lots of donations of pizza, donuts, and water."

A 12-foot inflatable rat donated by the Teamsters is making the rounds at picket lines, traveling from East Grand Forks to Hillsboro over the weekend. BCTGM Local 48G in Keokuk, Iowa, sent a \$500 check this week. The Keokuk local ended a 10-month lockout against Roquette America in July.

Sonnie Collison, vice president of Local 167G in East Grand Forks, said the union is organizing weekly Friday rallies from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the Sorlie Bridge on Demers connecting East Grand Forks and Grand Forks. "If we lose this fight, it could have a domino effect on other unions," said

Collison.

"Locked-out workers are starting to feel financial pressure," said Sie Rawls in Drayton. "Most of us knew the lockout was coming and set aside money, but with no unemployment it's going to get tough." The union is setting up a hardship fund, and workers are using food pantries. The union is demanding that the North Dakota government provide jobless benefits.

In early August scabs derailed a molasses tank car on company property, said Rawls. "It's been lying on its side for three weeks." Union rail workers from the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe "have refused to cross the picket line to put the car back on the rails."

The *Militant* continues to receive a welcome reception on picket lines and in towns in the valley. This weekend 12 workers picked up subscriptions, including nine on the picket lines.

Donations can be sent to the Sugar Beet Workers Fund, 175 Aurora Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103. Write checks to Minnesota AFL-CIO, with "BCTGM Lockout 2011" in the memo line.

*Tom Baumann contributed to this article.*

### Join us in Midwest for Labor Day events

*Members of the Socialist Workers Party and others will be taking part in the following labor actions and other events to reach out with the Militant and support labor struggles in the Midwest.*

#### Peoria, Illinois

September 5, 2 p.m.—Labor Day Parade downtown followed by party on the Riverfront. Join locked-out members of Teamsters Local 647 from Henry, Ill., United Auto Workers members at Caterpillar, and other working people. Free bus rides provided by Amalgamated Transit Union from Riverfront to the parade.

#### Metropolis, Illinois

September 5, 10 a.m.—Parade steps off along Fifth Street, followed by all-day music and picnic at Fort Massac State Park. United Steelworkers Local 7-669 members from Honeywell will march in the parade as well as other unions.

#### Keokuk, Iowa

September 5, 11 a.m.—Parade starts at Main and 20th streets. March with "Club 48G" float of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union. Food, beverages, and entertainment afterwards at Labor Temple, 301 Blondeau St.

#### East Grand Forks, Minnesota

September 9, 4:30 to 6 p.m.—Rally at the Sorlie Bridge on Demers (between Whitey's and Cabela's) in solidarity with 1,300 members of BCTGM union locked out by American Crystal Sugar.

#### Topeka, Kansas

September 7, 10 a.m.—Public hearings on "Targeted Regulations of Abortion Providers" at SRS Learning Center, Rooms A and B, 2600 SW East Circle Drive South.  
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.—"Speak for Choice" rally at Kansas state capitol sponsored by Speak for Choice and Kansas National Organization for Women.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



#### September 12, 1986

HARTFORD, Conn.—A thousand Puerto Ricans and their supporters rallied here August 30 to demand freedom for 16 pro-independence activists facing trial for the 1983 robbery of a Wells Fargo armored truck. Nine of those charged are still being held without bail a year after their arrest. The demonstrators also called for independence for Puerto Rico.

August 30 is the first anniversary of the paramilitary raids in which more than 200 FBI agents entered Puerto Rico, dragged Puerto Rican patriots from their homes in chains, brought them to the United States, concealed them from their lawyers, and denied them bail.



#### September 4 & 11, 1961

Robert F. Williams, militant North Carolina Negro leader, is the object of a nationwide manhunt by the FBI. If caught, he will be turned over to the white-supremacist authorities of Union County, N.C.

Elements, operating with police impunity, made several attempts to kill Williams, made shooting forays into the Negro district and organized mobs against peaceful picket lines.

The week's picketing was marked by framed-up arrests of pickets, police-condoned attacks on them by racist hoodlums, and preparations of the Negro community to defend itself, arms in hands, from an expected invasion.



#### December 19, 1936

Seven workers were jailed in 1935 as "dynamiters." These men had been active in the bitter maritime "tanker" strike against the united power of the major California oil companies.

The men were railroaded to prison. The strike was crushed. Now, nearly two years later, the whole trial has been exposed as a ghastly frame-up and placed the State of California on trial.

Scudder has sworn that the Standard Oil Company, District Attorney Cleary, and Captain Healy of the San Francisco police combined to break a strike by framing innocent men.

The standards of California "justice" and of the Standard Oil Company are one and the same.



# ‘Ernesto Che Guevara always led by

## Argentine writer interviews Harry Villegas and Víctor Dreke, two historic leaders

The following is an interview with Víctor Dreke and Harry Villegas, two leaders of the Cuban Revolution who fought alongside Ernesto Che Guevara in the 1956-58 Cuban revolutionary war and internationalist combat missions.

The interview was conducted by Argentine writer José Coco López in June while the two were in Rosario, Argentina, participating in an international conference marking the 83rd anniversary of Guevara's birth in that city. The event was organized by the National University of Rosario and the Center for the Study of Che Guevara. The interview appeared in *Rosario/12*, an Argentine newspaper, and *Por Cuba*, a bulletin published by the Cuban Ministry of Culture.

Rich lessons and examples from Villegas's and Dreke's lives of revolutionary struggle are contained in *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'guerrilla'* and *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, both published by Pathfinder Press.

Dreke has served in military and diplomatic responsibilities for the Cuban government and is today president of the Africa-Cuba Friendship Society. Villegas, a brigadier general, serves today as executive vice president of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

Translation from Spanish and footnotes are by the *Militant*.



### BY COCO LÓPEZ

“When I found out Che had died, I cried.” General Harry Villegas, National Hero of Cuba, better known as Pombo and a veteran of three guerrilla campaigns, is not ashamed to admit to tears when he heard of the death of his commander and friend. A few hours before, on the Channel 5 radio show *Very Early*, I was surprised by his quick response when I asked him how he got out of Bolivia. “Fighting. There were six of us, three Cubans and three Bolivians. And we were facing 4,000 soldiers.” Pombo was in Rosario this week to take



Courtesy of Víctor Dreke

Internationalist volunteer combatants in Congo, 1965. Standing fifth from left is Víctor Dreke, second in command under Ernesto Che Guevara of Cuban forces aiding liberation struggle there.

part in “Che 83.”

He was accompanied on his trip from Cuba by Commander Víctor Dreke, second in command of the Cuban contingent in the guerrilla war in the Congo. When Che was murdered, Dreke was in Guinea-Bissau with Amílcar Cabral,<sup>1</sup> fighting for the country's independence from Portugal.

They were deeply affected by Guevara's death and in their homage to him pledged to intensify the battles for the liberation of the Portuguese colony. They pledged and they delivered.

To talk with them is to look back on the last 50 years of Latin American and world politics. Pombo is undoubtedly the most important source for answering

any military question having to do with Che. He was at his side in three guerrilla campaigns: the Sierra Maestra, the Congo, and Bolivia. At the age of fourteen he went up into the mountains to fight Batista. When he arrived triumphant in Havana as part of Che's column, he was the head of Che's escort.

Víctor Dreke saw Che for the first time in the Escambray mountains. Che was examining a bullet wound in Dreke's shoulder and his prognosis was for a quick recovery. In Africa, years later, they would fight side by side.

“I definitely do not agree with Che's assessment.” Dreke did not hesitate, when I asked him if the struggle in the Congo had been a failure, as Che says in his diary. He told me he's working on Cuba's internationalist mission in Africa. “I want to make it very clear that Che did not go to the Congo to hide. He who hides does not fight. One of our constant discussions was that he, as commander, should not expose himself so much in combat.”

Pombo is a good conversationalist, notable for his analytical abilities and the depth of his thinking. He always remembers that his jefe said that a guerrilla is not just someone who fires bullets. He thinks it's nonsense to say that Che was seeking death. He's convinced Che could have saved himself if he had given more importance to his personal situation, rather than to the sick and wounded and to the combatants from other Latin American countries.

When I ask him if it would have been possible to rescue Che from Bolivia with troops sent from Cuba, he gives me a surprised look and says such a question could only come through a lack of knowledge about the real situation of the guerrilla struggle in Bolivia.

Pombo and Dreke agree that Che led by example. He never asked a subordinate to do anything he was not prepared to do himself. That is not the only thing they agree on. Both give great importance to the call to create two, three, many Vietnams to confront imperialism, which Che put forward in 1967.<sup>2</sup>

Pombo believes that the guerrilla struggle in Bolivia was the Moncada of Latin America and that Che's ultimate



Harry Villegas (Pombo), right, with Ernesto Che Guevara. Villegas was one of roughly four dozen combatants from Bolivian guerrilla unit in 1966-67 as part of effort to aid the external

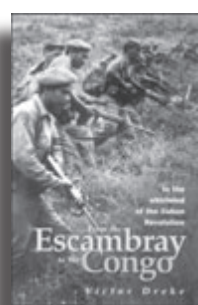
objective was to fight in Argentina. “But there is something more. When you speak of continent-wide liberation, you're talking about the Cuban Revolution, about Che and Fidel.”

Pombo came to Rosario for the first time in 1996 to launch his book, *Pombo: A Man of Che's 'guerrilla'*.<sup>3</sup> At that time he was bewildered by questions others asked him about where Che's soccer sympathies lay. He was more comfortable answering questions about the guerrilla struggle. In the presence of Perico Pérez, a well-known soccer fan, Pombo confessed to me that Che had never spoken to him about soccer.

There have been other trips since then. In 2008, he was struck by the favorable response to the Che statue,<sup>3</sup> something we shared on the banks of the Paraná River. There, for the first time, he felt that the people of Rosario had made Che their own.

We had three days of conversations. We gave ourselves time to discuss the Argentine Ciro Bustos, and Régis Debray.<sup>4</sup> Pombo believes Bustos wrote *Che Wants to See You* [subtitled: *The Untold Story of Che in Bolivia*] as a self-justification. He also believes that Debray was not completely fair about Che, although Che was about him. Che realized the Frenchman had talked too much but emphasized, “we have to know the context in which he talked.”

This was Dreke's first visit to Rosario. The day of his departure he visited the house where Che was born. Enviously good-natured, masters of a history worth listening to, Pombo and Dreke were honored with a medal conferred by the City Council. They went from Rosario to Alta Gracia, another of the cities on Che's route. There they were met with more questions about this illustrious native of Rosario, who would have been



## From the Escambray to the Congo In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution

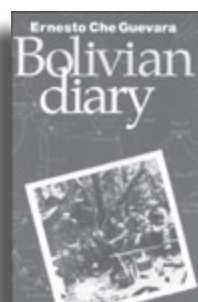
BY VÍCTOR DREKE

Dreke, second in command of the internationalist column in the Congo led by Che Guevara in 1965, recounts the creative joy with which working people have defended their revolutionary course—from Cuba to Africa and beyond. **\$17**

## Pombo: A Man of Che's Guerrilla With Che Guevara in Bolivia 1966-68

BY HARRY VILLEGAS

A young fighter still in his 20s, Harry Villegas led the small group of combatants who survived the Bolivian army's encirclement and lived to recount this epic chapter in the history of the Americas. **\$23**



## Bolivian Diary OF ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

Guevara's day-by-day chronicle of the 1966-67 guerrilla campaign in Bolivia, an effort to forge a continent-wide revolutionary movement of workers and peasants and open the road to socialist revolution in South America. **\$25**

*PathfinderPress.com*



Wanted poster for “Fighting” was the... when asked how he... forces following dea... three Cubans and th...



# example’ of Cuban Revolution



Guevara during campaign in Bolivia, late 1966. Pombo, Bolivia, Cuba, and Peru who served in Guevara’s guer-  
rison of socialist revolution in the Americas.

eighty-three on June 14. This native of Rosario known as Che, as Eduardo Galeano says, has this dangerous habit of being born again and again.

2. Reference is to Guevara’s last public statement, and the only one he made between the time he left Cuba in 1965 and his death in October 1967. His message to the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America—often called “Message to the Tricontinental”—was made public by the Cuban government in April 1967.
3. In June 2008 hundreds attended the unveiling of a statue of Guevara in Rosario marking the 80th anniversary of his birth.
4. Ciro Bustos is a painter and journalist who met with Guevara in Bolivia in March 1967 to discuss support activities for the Bolivian campaign in Argentina. Captured by the Bolivian army in April, he testified about his discussions with Guevara and provided sketches of the guerilla combatants. Régis Debray is a French journalist who conducted a survey of Alto Beni zone in Bolivia at Guevara’s request in late 1966. He discussed support activities with Guevara in March 1967 and was captured at the same time as Bustos. The two were imprisoned in Bolivia until 1970.

# RECOMPENSA

\$b. 10.000.—  
(CIEZ MILLONES DE BOLIVIANOS)  
POR CADA UNO VIVO

NDOLEROS MERCENARIOS AL SERVICIO DEL CASTROCOMUNISMO  
USANTES DE LUTO Y DOLOR EN LOS HOGARES BOLIVIANOS  
RESULTA CIERTA, DARA DERECHO A LA RECOMPENSA

ano, Ayúdanos a Capturarlos Vivos en lo Posible

Benigno Urbano Inti Dario

— Pueden usar barba o llevar otros nombres falsos

publicó en todo el país una vez concluidas las acciones.

survivors of Ernesto Che Guevara’s unit in Bolivia.  
answer from Harry Villegas, whose photo is at far left,  
and others escaped encirclement by Bolivian and U.S.  
ath of Guevara in October 1967. “There were six of us,  
three Bolivians. And we were facing 4,000 soldiers.”

# ‘You’re on your own,’ says NYC mayor

Continued from front page

Ride service that day because “they just don’t have the capacity. . . . So, in spite of the good weather, if you want to be safe, now’s the time to start moving.”

Bloomberg urged people to stock up, but many stores across the city closed early on Saturday, as those who owned and worked in them left to be on trains and buses home by noon.

In addition to evacuating nursing homes and hospitals in the lowest-lying areas, Bloomberg announced the evacuation of Coney Island Hospital, both campuses of Staten Island University Hospital, the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Manhattan, and NYU Medical Center in Manhattan’s Upper East Side. They were shuttered more than a full day before the storm. In some cases, vital services, such as emergency room care and ambulances, were not available until a day after Irene passed.

At the same time, Bloomberg made clear no consideration was given to evacuating any of the 12,000 people held in 10 city jails on Rikers Island. Built mostly on landfill, the small island sits in the river between Queens and the Bronx. According to the city’s evacuation map, it’s surrounded by land designated for evacuation in the event of a Category 2 hurricane, but itself is not designated for evacuation under any circumstances.

Bloomberg announced the city was setting up 81 shelters throughout the city for evacuees. “We have a capacity for something like 70,000 people,” adding that “we do not have beds for 70,000, but we’ll make do.”

The mayor encouraged people to check the city government’s website—which he said had been crashing due to overload—or to call 311 to find out if they are under evacuation orders. “It may take a few minutes, but we have additional staff in the offices pretty much keeping up with demand.”

“There were two evacuation centers near my home,” posted Brooklyn resident Yoo Eun Lee on Pebblemedia.org at 7 a.m., August 27. “I chose to go to the John Jay school because it was close to the subway station, a decision I came to regret so much. Because I wanted to check whether the evacuation center was already packed, I dialed 311 and it never worked.”

The staff intimated that free bus transportation might be organized the next day for those who lived far away, she wrote the next morning. But that afternoon, “Bad news: no chartered bus ride. And still no public transportation.”

“You can listen to the noise of the elevated train,” Bloomberg opened his press briefing on the morning of August 27. “That’s not going to be here this afternoon, and I think that’s the message that people have to start understanding,” he scolded listeners.

“We do not, incidentally, recommend that anyone wait for a bus to evacuate. The best thing to do is to use your own or public transportation to get yourself to a shelter, and that means you’ve got to do that right now.” Otherwise, he said, “you’ll be on your own,” which he followed up with a warning: “Staying behind is dangerous, staying behind is foolish, and it’s against the law.”

Bloomberg declined to say that by this time meteorologists were predicting Irene would be downgraded to a tropical storm before hitting the city. “We expect a strong Category 1 storm to hit



U.S. Army National Guard soldiers on the streets in Manhattan prior to arrival of Tropical Storm Irene. This was largest deployment of troops in New York since Sept. 11, 2001, events.

us tonight with winds between 55 and 75 miles an hour.” But Category 1 is defined by winds between 74 and 95 miles per hour.

“You say it’s a few drops,” he concluded derisively. “This is going to be a very serious storm.” Meanwhile, media hype was building by the hour.

Bloomberg announced that “an awful lot of buildings,” including all public housing facilities, were turning off elevators. Indeed many buildings across the city, including this reporter’s apartment building in the Bronx, had no elevator service the entire weekend. “We just don’t need people stuck in elevators. . . . The Fire Department should be standing by for real emergencies,” Bloomberg said.

## Class differentiated measures

But such measures were implemented in a sharply class-differentiated manner. Luxury rentals across the street and around the corner from the Isaacs Houses in East Harlem, for example, had no intention of shutting anything down unless they lost power, according to interviews with building staff by DNAinfo reporter Jeff Mays.

In the afternoon, after public transport was no longer running, Bloomberg ordered everyone left in Zone A public housing to evacuate immediately, saying buses were being sent to housing projects.

“Your buildings are shutting down. Your elevators are shutting down. Your boilers are shutting down,” the mayor said as a pressure tactic. The shutdowns were implemented well before the deadline, making it harder for many tenants to actually evacuate.

Despite incessant prodding and exaggerated admonitions, many in public housing decided instead to stay. For example, only about half the residents left the large Jacob Riis housing complex in the evacuation area, one building worker told DNAinfo. Fewer than 10,000 spent the night in city shelters.

The vast majority of some 600 seniors living in high-rise apartments in Atlantic City, N.J., responded similarly to mandatory evacuation orders by Gov. Chris Christie. Christie publicly and disrespectfully implored them to leave but acknowledged he couldn’t force them and did not intend to arrest anyone.

“As usual we were just looking out for each other,” Becky Duer, 67, a resident at Best of Life Park, told Associated Press. Duer insisted the governor owed

them an apology for the way he spoke to them.

“People seem to think when you turn 62 your mind automatically goes and you can’t make a rational decision,” Phyllis Ehert, 74, told AP. “We all talked about it, considered what was best for our own individual needs and made a decision based on that.”

“Get the hell off the beach,” Christie insisted at an August 26 press conference. “You’re done, it’s 4:30. You’ve maximized your tan.” Then, after the storm passed August 28, he boasted, “The fact that we were successful in evacuating over a million people was a preemptive measure that I am confident saved lives.”

“Better to be over-prepared than not ready” was the refrain by politicians and the media in face of mounting evidence that the government’s response was one that would leave the people of New York City utterly unprepared on their own in the event of any real disaster.

In his August 27 afternoon address, Bloomberg said the subway system would probably not be up until “well into the day on Monday [August 29].”

Restoring service “involves us literally walking all the tracks, with our staff repairing things that we see with crews, and then running non-revenue trains over the tracks to be able to see everything is safe,” insisted MTA Chairman Jay Walder. “This is a difficult process . . . it will take some time.”

At 7:35 p.m. August 28, the *New York Post* reported that a handful of trains might be back up by Monday at noon. An hour later Gov. Andrew Cuomo suddenly announced that all subway service would be restored by 6 a.m.—and it was, in some cases well before that.

The hurricane turned out to be an occasion for the U.S. military to test its response to “domestic incidents.”

In the largest deployment of National Guard troops in New York since Sept. 11, 2001, some 7,700 airmen and soldiers were mobilized. It also marked the “first time the dual commander concept has been implemented in support of a natural disaster,” according to a Department of Defense press release. Under a “Joint Action Plan for Unity of Effort” adopted in March by the DOD, Department of Homeland Security, and Council of Governors, dual status commanders were appointed to command both federal active-duty forces (which were on standby but not deployed during Irene)

Continued on page 9



*Below is an excerpt from The Communist Manifesto, the founding document of the modern communist workers movement. The French edition is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. The document was written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels on behalf of the second congress of the Communist League, on the very eve of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions that swept through Europe in 1848-49. Marx and Engels were actively involved in the revolutionary struggle in Germany. Copyright © 1987 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

**BY KARL MARX  
AND FREDERICK ENGELS**

A part of the bourgeoisie is desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society.

To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organizers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole-and-corner reformers of every imaginable kind. This form of socialism has, moreover, been worked out into complete systems.

We may cite Proudhon's *Philoso-*



Contrary to bourgeois and utopian socialists, Marx and Engels did not see the working class as “the most suffering class,” but as the motor force of its own emancipation. Above, 1871 proclamation of the Paris Commune, the first working-class government.

*phie de la Misère* as an example of this form.<sup>1</sup>

The socialistic bourgeois want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat. The bourgeoisie naturally conceives the world in which it is supreme to be the best, and bourgeois socialism develops this comfortable conception into various more or less complete systems. In requiring the proletariat to carry out such a system, and thereby to march straightway into the social New Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> it but requires in reality that the proletariat should remain within the bounds of existing society, but should cast away all its hateful ideas concerning the bourgeoisie.

A second and more practical, but less systematic, form of this socialism sought to depreciate every revolutionary movement in the eyes of the working class, by showing that no mere political reform, but only a change in the material conditions of existence, in economical relations, could be of any advantage to them. By changes in the material conditions of existence, this form of socialism, however, by no means understands abolition of the bourgeois relations of production, an abolition that can be effected only by a revolution, but administrative reforms, based on the continued existence of these relations; reforms, therefore, that in no respect affect the relations between capital and labor, but, at the best, lessen the cost, and simplify the administrative work, of bourgeois government.

Bourgeois socialism attains adequate expression when, and only when, it becomes a mere figure of speech.

Free trade: for the benefit of the working class. Protective duties: for the benefit of the working class. Prison reform: for the benefit of the working class. This is the last word and the only seriously meant word of bourgeois socialism.

It is summed up in the phrase: the bourgeois is a bourgeois—for the benefit of the working class.

## Utopian socialism and communism

... The first direct attempts of the pro-

letariat to attain its own ends, made in times of universal excitement when feudal society was being overthrown, these attempts necessarily failed, owing to the then undeveloped state of the proletariat as well as to the absence of the economic conditions for its emancipation, conditions that had yet to be produced and could be produced by the impending bourgeois epoch alone. The revolutionary literature that accompanied these first movements of the proletariat had necessarily a reactionary character. It inculcated universal asceticism and social leveling in its crudest form.

The socialist and communist systems properly so called, those of Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen,<sup>3</sup> and others, spring into existence in the early undeveloped period, described above, of the struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie.

The founders of these systems see, indeed, the class antagonisms, as well as the action of the decomposing elements, in the prevailing form of society. But the proletariat, as yet in its infancy, offers to them the spectacle of a class without any historical initiative or any independent political movement.

Since the development of class antagonism keeps even pace with the development of industry, the economic situation, as they find it, does not as yet offer to them the material conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat. They therefore search after a new social science, after new social laws that are to create these conditions.

Historical action is to yield to their personal inventive action, historically created conditions of emancipation to fantastic ones, and the gradual, spontaneous class organization of the proletariat to an organization of society specially contrived by these inventors. Future history resolves itself, in their eyes, into the propaganda and the practical carrying out of their social plans.

In the formation of their plans they are conscious of caring chiefly for the interests of the working class, as being the most suffering class. Only from the point of view of being the most suffering class does the proletariat exist for them.

3. Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825), Charles Fourier (1772-1837) and Robert Owen (1771-1858) were outstanding utopian socialists.

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# The true face of capitalism

**Continued from front page**

thing we can play with,” Bloomberg said. “Staying behind is dangerous, staying behind is foolish, and it’s against the law.”

Then, after he and Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced the complete shutdown of all New York City subway and bus service at noon on Saturday—five hours before the deadline to leave—Bloomberg added, “If you want to evacuate later on, you’re going to be on your own. You’ll have to walk, or you’re going to have to find some way to use a car or a taxi.”

In the view of the capitalist rulers and their political spokespeople, in fact, workers are so stupid, so recalcitrant, that it was necessary to twist facts and fuel fears in order to coax them to evacuate. “Nature is dangerous. Pay attention,” Bloomberg scolded on Sunday. The news article in this issue cites other examples.

For the capitalist ruling families and top government and military officials, Irene was also a chance for a trial run of so-called “Homeland Security” plans they’ve been putting in place since the Clinton administration in the 1990s.

More than 7,600 National Guard troops were deployed along the East Coast and in Puerto Rico, according to a U.S. Air Force news service, including the largest National Guard mobilization in New York since September 11, 2001.

These forces were under the command of officers trained by the U.S. Northern Command, established in 2002 as one of the Pentagon’s seven global military commands. According to its website, US-NORTHCOM’s “civil support mission” includes not only “domestic disaster relief operations” but also “counter-drug operations and managing the consequences of a terrorist event employing a weapon of mass destruction.”

Key but unstated among these “civil support missions” is preparations by the ruling families to use their armed forces in years and decades ahead to quell struggles by workers and farmers on U.S. soil to defend our living standards, job conditions and political rights.

As Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said August 30, the operations carried out by Washington in connection with Irene “reflected a lot of training, preparation, exercises, equipment, provisions, all of which by the way came in part out of 9/11.”

Perhaps it was one of those “exercises” that had to be aborted in New York when, as reported elsewhere in this issue, repeated statements by Bloomberg and

Metropolitan Transit Authority chief Jay Walder that subway service would not resume until long after rush hour Monday morning suddenly gave way to the announcement that trains would be running well before rush hour. Behind-the-scenes arm-twisting by employers and businesses facing another day of lost sales, labor, and profits seemed to trump further “training.”

The ruling families and their government can and do try to prepare for the wars and class battles they know are coming. But no social plan to defend the interests of the big working majority of the population is possible under capitalism.

Imagine what would have happened if Irene had maintained hurricane-force winds that hit New York City. Look at what is happening to hundreds of thousands of working people devastated by flooding in towns and small cities across the Northeast. Remember the deaths and destruction inflicted on hundreds of thousands in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama in 2005 due to the social crisis in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

This is the true face of capitalism.

It is a powerful argument for why the working class and its allies must build a revolutionary social movement able to conquer workers power and overturn the dictatorship of capital.

It is a powerful argument for workers using that state power to nationalize the land and housing, so working people are no longer evicted, foreclosed, or made to bear the burden on their own of rebuilding or repairing homes damaged or destroyed by flooding or by winds. And no longer forced to live on floodplains and river banks, while high-income professionals and other middle-class and bourgeois layers have their homes in safer locations.

There is one country in the world today—Cuba—where workers and farmers made a socialist revolution half a century ago and brought to power a government of their own. As a result of the organized and disciplined social solidarity made possible by that proletarian revolution, only 30 people have died in 16 major hurricanes there over the past decade, while more than 40 died in the United States as result of Irene alone.

By emulating that road in the United States, not only will working people no longer be “on our own” in face of natural disasters. We will have in our hands the necessary political instrument to fight to end, once and for all, the imperialist wars, exploitation, racism, oppression of women, and destruction of the earth’s environment that capitalism inevitably produces.

## ‘You’re on your own’

**Continued from page 7**

and state National Guard forces.

The entire operation involving the U.S. military and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is being overseen by the U.S. Northern Command. Established in 2002, NORTHCOM is the first military command with responsibility over the United States and the rest of North America. Its stated mission is to “organize and execute homeland defense and civil support missions.”

### Contrast with Cuban Revolution

The U.S. capitalist rulers’ response contrasts sharply with that of Cuba, where working people have held and defended their socialist revolution for five decades. There evacuation is a social, not an individual, undertaking and is organized on the basis of solidarity from the neighborhood and town to national level.

The Caribbean island is subject to frequent and powerful hurricanes. The lives, livelihoods, and property, including pets and livestock, of workers and farmers are the priority.

“Though struck 16 times by major hurricanes in this decade, only 30 people have lost their lives in Cuba, whereas during Hurricane Katrina alone, 1,500 people died in the United States,” pointed out a 2010 report titled “Putting Preparedness Above Politics: U.S.-Cuba Cooperation Against the Threat of Hurricanes” by the Center for International Policy.

During Hurricane Ike and Hurricane Gustav in 2008, the most devastating in Cuba’s history, some 444,000 homes were damaged and 63,000 completely destroyed, along with extensive damage to electrical power and other infrastructure. More than 3 million people were evacuated.

Hundreds were killed in Haiti during those storms. In the United States, 84. In Cuba, which took the brunt, no one died as a result of Gustav and only seven during Ike.

After the hurricanes hit, the revolutionary government organized measures to alleviate the burden on working people. For example, 70 volunteer brigades were established to rebuild homes.

During Hurricane Ivan in September 2004, some 1.9 million were evacuated. Some 2,500 shelters were set up, and 1,700 kitchens with more than 6,000 culinary workers in Havana alone. Everyone had access to doctors and medical supplies.

“They ask us how this is possible” that so many were evacuated and so few died, said Cuban Vice President José Machado Ventura at a meeting in Harlem in September 2008. “It is possible because of the attention the revolutionary government gives to every citizen.” The strength of the revolution is seen in “genuine solidarity,” the revolutionary leader explained.

## ‘No one even knocked on our door,’ says Brooklyn worker

**BY NANCY BOYASKO**

**AND SARA LOBMAN**

BROOKLYN, N.Y.—As the winds from Hurricane Irene were claming, *Militant* reporters talked to working people in Sheepshead Bay and Brighton Beach, areas in Brooklyn that Mayor Michael Bloomberg had ordered evacuated.

While the evacuation order said people in low-lying areas had to be out by 5 p.m. Saturday, public transit was shut down at noon. “If you wait, you’ll be on your own,” Bloomberg said.

Like many in the area, Armand Poghosyan, from Brighton Beach, stayed through the storm. “It was no big deal,” he said. “I live in the first building from the ocean. There was supposedly a mandatory evacuation. But no one came by and knocked on our door to talk to us. You had to find out on the news.” Residents also received automated phone calls telling them to leave.

“Anyway,” he added. “I don’t trust the government to tell us the truth. There was a lot of exaggeration.”

On Saturday evening, hours before the storm’s arrival, Poghosyan went outside. “A cop stopped me,” he reports. “When I told him I was going to my friend’s house that was on higher ground, he said, ‘You should have thought of that earlier.’ He said if I didn’t go back in, he would give me a \$500 ticket.”

One of Poghosyan’s friends, Jonathan Eirushevich, a Kingsborough Community College student, said he also received a call from the school on his cell phone encouraging him to leave. Eirushevich noted that in his neighborhood cops didn’t enforce the 5 p.m. deadline and people were out walking their dogs until evening.

Many residents spent a lot of money on emergency supplies, sand bags, and other material to protect their residences or on transportation and hotels.

“We left on Saturday morning and took the train to a friend’s house,” Mustaffer Ada, 18, from Sheepshead Bay, told the *Militant*. “But there were no subways today to get home, so we had to pay for a car service. They charged \$30, way more than usual.”

Another Sheepshead Bay resident who declined to give his name said that sand bags needed to protect his first floor apartment cost \$6.50 *each*. No materials were provided by the city

Luis Velez woke up at 5:00 a.m. Sunday to rising water in his basement apartment because of a backed-up drain near the house. Construction worker Pedro Beltrán was helping him when a *Militant* reporter stopped by. “Everybody’s left to clean up on their own,” Beltrán said. “Just like people had to figure out how to evacuate on their own. The city could’ve had buses lined up.”

Rolland Turner, a disabled worker from Coney Island, and her kids were part of a smaller number of working people who opted to go to public schools set up as shelters. Interviewed as she was leaving the shelter, bags in hand, Turner said she had her own car and was able to return home as soon as city officials gave the okay. But one family of 12, she said, had to stay another night because there was still no public transit to their home in Coney Island.

Ada, who works at a Kmart, said he was told he would be paid for the hours he lost due to the storm. But Cody Demaria, who works at McDonald’s, is not getting paid for the 16 hours he lost. “I got an IOU from Irene,” Demaria said.

In New International issue 14

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